

**THE MEDICINE-MAN AND THE PROFESSIONAL
OCCUPATIONS**



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THE RELATION OF THE MEDICINE-MAN TO THE ORIGIN OF THE PROFESSIONAL OCCUPATIONS

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IN the last volume of his *Synthetic Philosophy* (*Principles of Sociology*, Vol. III, pp. 179-324, "Professional Institutions") Mr. Herbert Spencer has made an attempt to work out a special application of his ghost theory of the origin of worship, in the thesis that the medicine-man is the source and origin of the learned and artistic occupations. This is a very fascinating theory and has in it elements of truth and of verisimilitude, but it is very far from affording a true view either of the place of the medicine-man in the development of society or of the origins of the occupations. It does not, indeed, seem probable that Spencer would have made this elaborate and somewhat strained effort to give the medicine-man a pre-eminent place in the development of the occupations if he had not been in a way committed to this course by his defective theory of the origin of worship in attention to dead ancestors. But having settled upon his theory, Spencer in these chapters pushes to the limit his habit of selecting the evidence favorable to his theory and omitting or brushing away the unfavorable evidence. Moreover, he has here resorted to a device which I believe he has not before used to any extent, that of giving evidence of an indeterminate character and claiming that "by implication" it is favorable to his argument. But after these detractions we must, as usual, admit that Spencer has opened up a new field of investigation and has treated it in a most suggestive manner. With a view to determining the amount of truth in the conclusions of Spencer, I will examine his statements in approximately the order they are made; and I will at the same time present some evidence, both from the sources used by Spencer and from other sources, tending to establish a different view of the relation of the medicine-man to the occupations.

The following preliminary statement of Spencer's general standpoint should be given first of all, in order that the bearing of his particular claims may be well understood:

Recognizing the general truth, variously illustrated in the preceding parts of this work, that all social structures result from specializations of a relatively homogeneous mass, our first inquiry must be—in which part of such mass do professional institutions originate? Stated in a definite form, the reply is that traces of the professional agencies, or some of them, arise in the primitive politico-ecclesiastical agency; and that as fast as this becomes divided into the political and ecclesiastical the ecclesiastical more especially carries with it the germs of the professional, and eventually develops them. Remembering that in the earliest social groups there is temporary chieftainship in time of war, and that where war is frequent the chieftainship becomes permanent; remembering that efficient co-operation in war requires subordination to him, and that when his chieftainship becomes established such subordination, though mainly limited to war-times, shows itself at other times and favors social co-operation; remembering

that when under his leadership his tribe subjugates other tribes he begins to be propitiated by them, while he is more and more admired and obeyed by his own tribe; remembering that in virtue of the universal ghost theory the power he is supposed to exercise after death is even greater than the power he displayed during life — we understand how it happens that ministrations to him after death, like in kind to those received by him during life, are maintained and often increased. . . . Laudations are uttered before him while he is alive, and the like or greater laudations when he is dead. Dancing, at first a spontaneous expression of joy in his presence, becomes a ceremonial observance on occasions of worshipping his ghost. And of course it is the same with the accompanying music: instrumental or vocal, it is performed before the natural ruler and the supernatural ruler. Obviously, then, if any of these actions and agencies common to political loyalty and divine worship have characters akin to certain professional actions and agencies, these last named must be considered as having double roots in the politico-ecclesiastical agency. It is also obvious that if, along with increasing differentiation of these twin agencies, the ecclesiastical develops more imposingly and widely, partly because the supposed superhuman being to which it ministers continually increases in ascribed power, and partly because worship of him, instead of being limited to one place, spreads to many places, these professional actions and agencies will develop more especially in connection with it. . . . And naturally the agencies of which laudatory orations, hymnal poetry, dramatized triumphs, as well as sculptured and painted representations in dedicated buildings, are products, will develop in connection chiefly with those who permanently minister to the apotheosized rulers — the priests. . . . A further reason why the professions thus implied, and others not included among them, such as those of the lawyer and the teacher, have an ecclesiastical origin is that the priest-class comes of necessity to be distinguished above other classes by knowledge and intellectual capacity. His cunning, skill, and acquaintance with the nature of things give the primitive priest or medicine-man influence over his fellows; and those traits continue to be distinctive of him when, in later stages, his priestly character becomes distinct. His power as priest is augmented by those feats and products which exceed the ability of the people to achieve or understand; and he is therefore under a constant stimulus to acquire the superior culture and mental powers needed for those activities which we class as professional. Once more there is the often-recognized fact that the priest-class, supplied by other classes with the means of living, becomes, by implication, a leisured class. Not called upon to work for subsistence, its members are able to devote time and energy to that intellectual labor and discipline which are required for professional occupations as distinguished from other occupations.¹

It will be seen that two different classes of callings, laudatory and scientific, are assumed to have their origin in attention to rulers, either living or dead, and that, according to Spencer's view, attentions and services to dead rulers are so much more important than attention and services to living rulers that the occupations representing these attentions and services are developed by the representatives of the dead rather than of the living. On the contrary, we shall see reason to doubt that the professional occupations originated or developed exclusively in connection with either living or dead rulers, and that, in so far as their development and origin were connected with rulers at all, the court hanger-on played a more important part than the medicine-man.

When we come to consider the professions separately we find that the profession of medicine is largely in the hands of the medicine-man to begin with, and we naturally

¹ *Principles of Sociology*, Vol. III, pp. 181 ff.

assume that he is the sole practitioner, and that he is the forerunner of the physician, if of any representative of the professional occupations. But, while it is true that the medicine-man is in a way a physician, he has not a monopoly of medical practice in his tribe, and he does not practice in all branches of medicine, nor is it apparent that he has conspicuously led the way in the development of a science of medicine. His function is, in fact, a limited one. He is concerned with the practice of magic, and works almost wholly by suggestive means. He relieves pain by pretending to have charmed out or sucked out the *causa nocens*; he brings ill upon other people, and he ascertains by suggestive means who is responsible for the death of a native, or pretends to do so. Alongside the medicine-man there are often lay practitioners, both men and women, who rely more on drugs and surgery than the medicine-man, and who are more in the line of scientific medical practice than the medicine-man himself. This condition of things is very well illustrated among the Araucanians, who

have three kinds of physicians, the *ampives*, the *vileus*, and the *machis*. The *ampives*, a word equivalent to empirics, are the best. They employ in their cures only simples, are skilful herbalists, and have some very good ideas of the pulse, and other diagnostics. The *vileus* correspond to the regular physicians. Their principal theory is that all contagious disorders proceed from insects. . . . The *machis* are a superstitious class that are to be met with among all the savage nations of both continents. They maintain that all serious disorders proceed from witchcraft, and pretend to cure them by supernatural means, for which reason they are employed in desperate cases, when the exertions of the *ampives* or *vileus* are ineffectual. . . . They have besides these other kinds of professors of medicine. The first, who may be styled surgeons, are skilful in replacing dislocations, in repairing fractures, and in curing wounds and ulcers; they are called *gutarve*.²

Of the Tasmanians, one of the most primitive of all ethnological groups, Bonwick reports that they had various remedies. They relieved inflammation and assuaged the pains of rheumatism by bleeding; pain in the head or stomach was relieved by tight and wet bandages; the *Mesembryanthemum*, or pig-face, and other herbs were used as purgatives; a bath in salt water, or the application of ashes to the skin, was the prescription for cutaneous diseases; drinking copiously of cold water and then lying by the fire was used to promote perspiration; alum was used variously; shampooing, especially with the utterance of favorite charms, was held efficacious in various disorders; cold water was sprinkled on the body in fevers; a decoction of certain leaves was applied to relieve pain; ashes were used for syphilitic sores, and the oil of the mutton-bird for rheumatism; blood was staunched in severe wounds by clay and leaves, while women constantly poured water over the part; leaves of the *Ziera* (stink-weed) were worn around the head to relieve pain; massage was in use; and, on the magical side, various charms and incantations.³ Among the Hottentots, according to Kolben, there is in every kraal a physician, and in the large ones two, skilled in the botany, surgery, and medicine of the tribe, and chosen by election out of the sages of

² THOMPSON, *Alcedo's Geographical and Historical Dict. of America*, Vol. I, p. 414.

³ BONWICK, *Daily Life of the Tasmanians*, p. 89.

each kraal to look after the health of the inhabitants. They practice without reward, and keep their preparations very secret. There are also several old women in every kraal who pretend to great skill in the virtues of roots and herbs. These are mortally hated by the doctors.⁴ There is also a cattle doctor in every kraal.⁵ In Madagascar also there was a popular medicine developed, in connection with which, indeed, the sorcerers played a large part, but the knowledge of the virtues of plants was shared and used by the people in general. They collected the leaves, bark, flowers, and seeds of various plants, several kinds of moss, and grass, tobacco, and capsicum, and understood correctly the aperient, cathartic, diuretic, tonic, and sedative qualities of these.⁶

While not losing sight, then, of the fact that among the groups lowest in culture the medicine-man played the most important rôle of all in medicine, we find here a rude medicine, much of it entirely independent of magic, participated in by both lay men and women, and derived from the experience of the group as a whole, not through the activities of the medicine-men in particular. And when in the somewhat higher stages of culture we find the medical art more developed and specialized, we certainly do not find that it is the medicine-man or priest who has specialized in this direction, but someone who, unlike the priest, did not have a paying specialty already. Thus in ancient Peru, as Garcilasso de la Vega reports, purges and bleedings were prescribed by those most experienced, who were "generally old women and great herbalists." The herbalists had a great reputation, knew the use of many herbs, and taught their knowledge to their children. "These physicians were not employed to cure anyone but only the king, the royal family, the curacas, and their relatives. The common people had to cure each other from what they had heard concerning the remedies."⁷ In Mexico also medicine was found in a surprisingly advanced stage, and to some degree specialized, partly by women, but more especially by a class of men who were not of the priestly class. The Mexican physicians, according to Clavigero, communicated to Dr. Hernandez the knowledge of 1,200 plants, with their proper Mexican names, more than 200 species of birds, and a large number of quadrupeds, reptiles, fish, insects, and minerals. "Europe has been obliged to the physicians of Mexico for tobacco, American balsam, gum copal, liquid amber, sarsaparilla, tecamaca, jalap, barley, and the purgative pine-seeds, and other samples which have been much used in medicine."⁸ "Blood-letting, an operation which their physicians performed with great dexterity and safety with the lancets of Itztli, was extremely common among the Mexicans, and other nations of Anahuac;"⁹ and Herrera says that the physicians of Guazacualco were for the most part women.¹⁰ The existing evidence in ancient Peru

⁴ KOLBEN, *Present State of the Cape of Good Hope*, Vol. I, p. 87.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 180.

⁶ ELLIS, *History of Madagascar*, Vol. I, p. 222.

⁷ GARCILASSO DE LA VEGA, *First Part of the Royal Commentaries of the Yncas*, translated by MARKHAM, Book II, chap. 24.

⁸ CLAVIGERO, *The History of Mexico*, translated by CULLEN, Book VII, chap. 59.

⁹ *Ibid.*, chap. 61.

¹⁰ HERRERA, *The General History of the Vast Continent and Islands of America*, translated by STEPHENS, Vol. IV, p. 127.

and Mexico indicates that medical practice was still associated with sorcery and superstitious ceremonies, as we should expect to find it (in view of the belief that diseases were spirit-caused), but there had at the same time grown up a body of empirical knowledge, in the hands of specialists, tending to displace the practices of the medicine-man. We may note also that the same state of things existed in Assyria and Babylonia, countries not unlike Mexico in their general condition of culture:

The doctor had long been an institution in Assyria and Babylonia. It is true that the great bulk of the people had recourse to religious charms and ceremonies when they were ill, and ascribed their sickness to possession by demons instead of to natural causes. But there was a continually increasing number of the educated who looked for aid in their maladies rather to the physician with his medicines than to the sorcerer or priest with his charms.¹¹

The assumption of Spencer in connection with evidence such as the last given, that the doctors had arisen as one division of the priestly class, seems unwarranted. The medicine-man and the priest¹² relied almost wholly, as had been said, on suggestion, and before the development of a knowledge of drugs and surgery medicine was almost altogether on the suggestive basis. With the natural development of knowledge, however, in a growing society, the priest, if for no other reason, because there were some limitations to the objects of his attention, continued to work on the suggestive basis, while there arose rival schools of medicine, operating on scientific or empirical principles. It must be noticed also that the priest had never had much prominence in surgery, because this is not favorable to the use of suggestion. Instead, therefore, of contributing conspicuously to the development of a scientific medicine, the medicine-man and priest retained a precarious hold on medical practice until entirely displaced by lay specialists, who relied more on drugs and surgery than on suggestion.

In his treatment of the dancer and musician Spencer shows that music and dancing accompany strong emotion, and were used particularly after victory by those welcoming the warriors home. He also shows that a special class was developed, sometimes women, sometimes men, to dance and sing before chiefs and rulers, and to express admiration and praise for these as well as to amuse them. This proposition is quite true, but it is a far cry from this to the conclusion that the medicine-men, who sang and danced in connection with religious observances, rather than the people in general or the court hangers-on in particular, became differentiated into professional musicians and dancers. There is, in fact, scarcely a shred of evidence to indicate that the priestly class was conspicuously associated in early times with the development of music and dancing. The evidence is all to the contrary. The professionals were plainly not medicine-men, but a class of court hangers-on, corresponding to the troubadours and the troupes of strolling players of early times in Europe, while spontaneous expressions continued to be manifested by the populace in general.

¹¹ SAYCE, *Social Life Among the Assyrians and Babylonians*, p. 98.

a more advanced stage, although the correctness of this standpoint is questionable.

¹² The priest is here considered as the medicine-man in

A few examples will illustrate sufficiently the nature of early spontaneous and professional music and dancing and the character of the participants. In 1 Sam. 18:6, 7, we read: "And it came to pass as they came, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, that the women came out of all cities of Israel, singing and dancing to meet king Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of music. And the women answered one another as they played, and said, 'Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his 'ten thousands.'" Somewhat more organized, but still essentially spontaneous, are the dances of the North American Indians. The Iroquois, according to Morgan, had thirty-two distinct dances, and to each a separate object and history was attached as well as a different degree of popular favor. Some were war dances, some costume dances; some designed exclusively for females, others for warriors; but the greater part of them were open to all of both sexes who desired to participate. Both the dancing and the singing were revivals or repetitions of the various activities of the group, particularly of the emotional crises of the group or individual life.¹³ In Africa, where despotic forms of government flourish, and a consequent patronage of the arts, we find professional musicians and dancers. These either attach themselves to some court or wander from place to place. A chief usually keeps two or three of them, who sing his praises and those of his white visitors. These singers also attach themselves temporarily to any great man and praise his wit and exploits. But in case the expected presents are not given or are not satisfactory, they then go to the villages round about and retract all they had previously said of their "protectors." They do a prosperous business, and their wives have more beads, it is said, than the chief's wife. In spite of this they are considered disreputable, and are not allowed the rite of burial, but their bodies are placed upright in a hollow tree and allowed to rot.¹⁴ Further evidence cited by Spencer shows the importance of the court in encouraging the professional musician and dancer:

Schweinfurth records that at the court of King Munza, the Monbutto ruler, there were professional musicians, ballad-singers, and dancers, whose function it was to glorify and please the king. And in Dahomy, according to Burton, "the bards are of both sexes, and the women dwell in the palace . . . ; the king keeps a whole troupe of these laureates. . . ." In processions in Ashantee, "each noble is attended by his flatterers, who proclaim, in boisterous songs, the 'strong names' of their master;" and on the Gold coast "every chief has a hornblower and a special air of his own." Similarly we learn from Park that among the Mandingos there are minstrels who "sing extempore songs in honor of their chief men, or any other persons who are willing to give 'solid pudding for empty praise.'" ¹⁵

Without multiplying instances from the lower races, we may say that the evidence all goes to show that the patronage of the rich is important or essential to the development of specialists in music and dancing. Following his usual method at this point — that is, the one corresponding with his ghost theory of the origin of worship — Spencer attempts to show that the praised when living became also the praised when dead,

¹³ MORGAN, *League of the Iroquois*, p. 261.

¹⁵ SPENCER, *loc. cit.*, p. 204.

¹⁴ WALLASCHKE, *Primitive Music*, p. 66.

and that the praise of the dead became the office of those concerned with the dead, namely, the medicine-men or priests, and that music and dancing were further developed by this class. "Since it was the function of the minstrel now to glorify his chief, and now to glorify his chief's ancestors, we see that in the one capacity he lauded the living potentate, and in the other capacity he lauded the deceased potentate as a priest lauds a diety."¹⁶ But the evidence does not hold out very far along this line. All that can reasonably be claimed is that the church in many places became a very powerful agency, and consequently a powerful patron, and that the offices of the church were promoted in a great degree by music, and in a very slight degree by dancing, and that churchmen, having leisure, taste, and the stimulation to do so, made important contributions, especially in Europe, to the development of music—but not more important than we should expect in view of the importance of music as a piece of church machinery. That the professional musician is a product of attention to the dead rather than the living is a baseless contention, and that the professional dancer is a church product is perhaps the slenderest claim that Spencer anywhere makes on our imagination.

In connection with his view of the relation of the priestly class to the development of poets, orators, dramatists, and actors, Spencer says:

Ovations, now to the living king and now to the dead king, while taking saltatory and musical forms, took also verbal forms, originally spontaneous and irregular, but presently studied and measured: whence, first, the unrhythmical speech of the orator, which under higher emotional excitement grew into the rhythmical speech of the priest-poet, chanting verses—verses that finally became established hymns of praise. Meanwhile from accompanying rude imitation of the hero's acts, performed now by one and now by several, grew dramatic representations, which, little by little elaborated, fell under the regulations of a chief actor, who prefigured the playwright. And out of these germs, all pertaining to worship, came eventually the various professions of poets, actors, dramatists, and the subdivisions of these.¹⁷

In this relation, as constantly in his whole discussion, Spencer seeks a more remote and complex explanation when there is a simpler one at hand. Races so low in the scale of organization that they have no political rulers both make and recite and act poems and dramas; and if this is not connected with "living potentates," it is much the more not connected with "dead potentates." It is perhaps true that there is not a lower race in existence today than the central Australians, and yet among them Mr. Baldwin Spencer and Mr. F. J. Gillen were present on the occasion of one of the gatherings in connection with the initiation of the young men, commencing in the middle of September and lasting until the middle of the following January, during which time there was a constant succession of essentially dramatic ceremonies, not a day passing without one, while there were sometimes as many as five or six during the twenty-four hours. These ceremonies or *quabara* related to the wanderings of the alcheringa, or mythical ancestors of the tribe; each ceremony was the property of some individual who either made it himself or inherited it from someone—

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 212.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 318.

generally a father or elder brother—and it could be acted only by his permission.¹⁸ A single instance will suffice to illustrate the crude but dramatic character of these performances:

[The men] were supposed to represent two eagle-hawks quarreling over a piece of flesh, which was represented by the downy mass in one man's mouth. At first they remained squatting on their shields, moving their arms up and down, and still continuing this action, which was supposed to represent the flapping of wings, they jumped off the shields, and with their bodies bent up and arms extended and flapping, began circling round each other as if each were afraid of coming to close quarters. Then they stopped and moved a step or two at a time, first to one side and then to the other, until finally they came to close quarters and began fighting with their heads for the possession of the piece of meat. . . . The attacking man at length seized with his teeth the piece of meat and wrenched it out of the other man's mouth. The acting in this ceremony was especially good, the actions and movements of the birds being admirably represented, and the whole scene with the decorated men in front and the group of interested natives in the background was by no means devoid of picturesqueness.¹⁹

It is well known also that the North American Indians produced some very tender poems of love and sentiment;²⁰ and there are several delicate nature poems in the poetry of the Eskimo. Neither does the prose literature of the natural races show the influence of the medicine-man which Spencer alleges; Mr. Ellis's chapters on the proverbs, fables, and folklore of the Africans of the Slave Coast show no signs of connection with the medicine-man. The stories remind us sometimes of the stories of Uncle Remus and sometimes of Grimm's fairy-tales:

The fables in vogue amongst the Ewe-speaking people, and of which there are a great number, are always material, and in no way connected with metaphor. They are tales pure and simple, are not designed to account for events or phenomena in nature or life, and have no analogy with the moral fables which were once popular in Europe, and of which those of Æsop afford an ensample. They are merely stories of the adventures of beasts and birds, to whom the Ewe-speaking native ascribes a power of speech, and whose moral nature he conceives to be at least as analogous to that of man as their physical nature. . . . The fables are usually recounted on moonlight nights, when the young people of the town or village gather together in one of the open spaces amongst the houses. It is usual for the story-teller to be accompanied by the sound of a drum, whose rhythm occurs after each sentence.²¹

There is, in fact, almost no end to the instances of poetry and drama and literature under conditions which preclude the assumption that they were produced by priests or directed toward great men. But in connection with literature, as with music and dancing, we find that wherever court life and consequently court patronage existed professional poets and actors were developed. These naturally sang the praises of their patrons, but they were, for the most part, laymen, and not priests, and their art celebrated the living, and not the dead. The ancient kingdoms of Mexico and Peru represent highly developed political and ecclesiastical control, but the literature of

¹⁸ SPENCER AND GILLEN, *The Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 272.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 296.

²⁰ Cf. BRINTON, *Essays of an Americanist*, *passim*.

²¹ ELLIS, *The Ewe-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast of West Africa*, p. 268.

these countries does not show marked priestly influences. Of the ancient Nahuatl poetry Brinton says:

The profession of poet stood in highest honor. It was the custom before the Conquest for every town, every ruler, and every person of importance to maintain a company of singers and dancers, paying them fixed salaries, and the early writer, Duran, tells us that this custom continued in his own time, long after the Conquest. . . . In the training of these artists their patrons took a deep personal interest, and were not at all tolerant of neglected duties. We are told that the chief selected the song which was to be sung and the tune by which it was to be accompanied; and did any one of the choir sing falsely, a drummer beat out of time, or a dancer strike an incorrect attitude, the unfortunate artist was instantly called forth, placed in bonds and summarily executed the next morning.²²

The antiquary Boturini, writing about two centuries after the Conquest, classified all the ancient Nahauatl songs under two heads, those treating mainly of historical subjects, and those of a fictitious, emotional, or imaginative character.²³

About the same state of literature is reported by Garcilasso among the Peruvians:

The *Amautas*, who were philosophers, were not wanting in ability to compose comedies and tragedies, which were represented before their kings on solemn festivals, and before the lords of their court. The actors were not common people, but Yncas and noblemen, sons of Curacas, or the Curacas themselves, down to masters of the camp. For the subject-matter of the tragedy should, it was considered, be properly represented, as it always related to military deeds, triumphs, and victories, or to the grandeur of former kings and other heroic men. The arguments of the comedies were on agriculture and familiar household subjects. . . . They did not allow improper or vile farces. . . . They understood the composition of long and short verses, with the right number of syllables in each. Their love songs were composed in this way, with different tunes. . . . They also recorded the deeds of their kings in verse, and those of other famous Yncas and Curacas. . . . They did not use rhymes in the verses, but all were blank. . . . Other verses are on the subject of astrology; and the Ynca poets treated of the secondary causes, by means of which God acts in the region of the air, to cause lightning and thunder, hail, snow, and rain.²⁴

We find, indeed, some signs of priestly influence and of remembrance of the dead in the poems of these two countries, but the relation between patron and court attendant is so plain, and the nature of the poetic subjects treated so varied, as to preclude the theory that the ecclesiastic is the dominant influence.

After confessing in this connection that among various groups, notably some African tribes and the nomads of Asia, "eulogies of the living ruler, whether or not with rhythmical words and musical utterance, are but little or not at all accompanied by eulogies of the apotheosized ruler," Spencer passes on to some of the higher stages of development, and shows that among the Egyptians, Greeks, and Christians the arts in question were practiced by the priesthood. And all that he claims may be admitted, or at any rate there is no occasion to question the evidence that the priests were concerned with the production of poetry and literature; for here, as in the case of music, the church availed itself of all the modes of suggestion and all the emotional helps

²² *Ancient Nahuatl Poetry*, p. 9.

²⁴ GARCILASSO DE LA VEGA, *op. cit.*, Book II, chap. 27.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

within its reach. It is a mistake to assume, however, that this development in the church was later in point of time or more important than the corresponding development in the world. The true statement seems to be that these forms of art developed naturally both in the world and in the church, as answering to the needs of human nature; and the church may be regarded as a microcosm, reproducing in small the activities of the world, or at any rate those activities essential to its own maintenance. A passage in Clavigero illustrates that priests did *various* things, *some of them artistic*, contributing to the up-keep of the church:

All the offices of religion were divided among the priests. Some were the sacrificers, others the diviners; some were the composers of hymns, others those who sung. Amongst the singers some sang at certain hours of the day, others sang at certain hours of the night. Some priests had the charge of keeping the temple clean, some took care of the ornaments of the altars; to others belonged the instructing of youth, the correcting of the calendar, the ordering of festivals, and the care of mythological paintings.²⁵

The church is here a patron of the arts, and the arts flourish under patronage. Under certain conditions, particularly with the dominance of theocratic ideas, the church may become a more powerful patron than the court or the world at large. The reflective, speculative, and artistic interests of society may even become identified to a large degree with the church and be fostered by it, while the motor activities are appropriated by the court and the world at large. In mediæval and feudal Europe the church became a temporal power, and in consequence a very powerful patron; and it did appropriate and represent certain characteristic mental interests, owing to peculiar conditions in the world at large. Among these interests were reading and writing. And, as Spencer points out, many churchmen were contributors to poetry; and the church developed also a body of dramatic literature of very slight artistic value. But to say nothing of the fact that churchmen alone were able to read and write, and that consequently their productions had the best chance to survive, the array of names of churchmen connected with literature in England which Spencer presents is not at all impressive, and is besides useless, since on his haphazard principle of selection it could equally well be shown that no literature has been created in England at all, except by lawyers, or that all poets have blue eyes.

In his treatment of the beginnings of painting, sculpture, and architecture, Spencer has singled out a slight and, so to speak, incidental connection which these arts have with spirit belief and the medicine-man, and has greatly overstated its importance:

Unquestionably . . . pictorial art in its first stages was occupied with sacred subjects, and the priest, when not himself the executant, was the director of the executants.²⁶

A rude carved or model image of a man placed on his grave gave origin to the sculptured representation of the god inclosed in his temple. A product of priestly skill at the outset, it continued in some cases to be such among early civilized peoples; and always thereafter, when executed by an artisan, conformed to priestly direction. Extending presently to the representation of other than divine and semi-divine personages, it eventually thus passed into its secularized form.²⁷

²⁵ CLAVIGERO, *op. cit.*, Book VI, chap. 15.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 320.

²⁶ SPENCER, *op. cit.*, p. 306.

✕ The art [of architecture] was first used either for the preservation of the dead or as ancillary to ceremonies in honor of the apotheosized dead. In either case the implication is that architecture in these simple beginnings fulfilled the ideas of the primitive medicine-men, or priests. Some director there must have been; and we can scarcely help concluding that he was at once the specially skilful man and the man who was supposed to be in communication with the departed spirits to be honored.²⁸

These are among the conclusions which Spencer says "leap to the eyes;" but in this neither the lay reader nor the student of these matters will probably agree with him. The interest in reviving in consciousness the emotional aspects of past activity, which we have seen in the arts of poetry and music, is common also to painting and sculpture. Spencer was familiar with the etchings and carvings of the prehistoric cave-men, and it is difficult to conceive that he counted these records of hunting activity and interests among the products of the medicine-man. There are, besides, among the natural races of today, particularly among the Australians and Africans, numerous rock carvings and paintings. Among the Bushmen are found thousands of animal forms, often twenty on a single stone. They use in the painting a lively red, brown ochre, yellow, and black, and occasionally green. The subjects are men and animals. One especially fine piece²⁹ represents a fight between the Bushmen and Kaffirs, in connection with a cattle raid which the former had made on the latter. Art of this character, we may believe, has no especial connection with the medicine-man. The person who scratched on a mammoth's tusk a representation of a vicious-looking mammoth³⁰ was pretty certainly no medicine-man, but one of the men foremost in the hunt, in whose imagination and memory the picture stuck. The connection which the medicine-man has with the art of sculpture and painting is a secondary one—the manufacture of images of other men to be used magically in bringing disaster on these men. This is essentially a fetichistic practice, and cannot be regarded as having a very far-reaching influence in art. It was as prevalent in the Middle Ages as among savages, and in neither case had a serious influence on art. As to architecture, that this originated in the construction of tombs is a conclusion so far from "leaping to the eyes" that quite the contrary takes place; and we shall not go far astray if we decide that architecture originated in the construction of habitations for the living, rather than tombs for the dead. Even the lower animals, notably the beaver and the bower-bird, have made a beginning in architecture, while making no special provision for the dead. It is, besides, in keeping with Spencer's ghost theory of worship that no attentions to the dead shall be found which are not foreshadowed in attentions to the living, and in accordance with this view we should expect him to claim that the tendency to build imposing structures is to be looked for, as in fact it is, in connection with political centralization and court life. The earliest imposing structures in the way of fortifications and strongholds represent the needs of the living, not

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 286.

²⁹ Reproduced in ANDREE, *Ethnographische Parallelen und Vergleiche*, 2d Series, Supplement.

³⁰ Reproduced in LUBBOCK, *Prehistoric Times*, p. 333.

of the dead; the castle precedes the cathedral, and the builder in either case is the result of patronage, not of priestly predisposition. This is by no means denying that the church made particular uses of architecture and that churchmen made notable contributions to it. But in these cases, as in the others, the simplest assumption is the safest, and is sustained by the mass of evidence. As soon as there developed at any point, either at the court or in the church, an amount of wealth making the support of a class of professionals possible, these appeared. This condition is seen first of all in connection with court life, and is very well illustrated in old Mexico:

Netzahualcoyotzin ordered all artists to make his likeness. . . . The goldsmiths made a golden statue, the feather-workers manufactured a portrait so like that it seemed to be living, the painters made another, the sculptors made his statue, and the architects erected a lion . . . which had his figure; even the blacksmiths made their work.³¹

Both the court and the church used the arts for their own glorification, and in some historical periods the church is pre-eminently the patron of the arts; but the arts originated in common consciousness; their connection with church and state is adventitious, and dependent on economic rather than psychological principles.

In explaining the origin of the historian, Spencer says:

The great deeds of the hero-god, recited, chanted or sung, and mimetically rendered, naturally came to be supplemented by details, so growing into accounts of his life; and thus the priest-poet gave origin to the biographer, whose narratives, being extended to less sacred personages, became secularized. Stories of the apotheosized chief or king, joined with stories of his companions and amplified by narratives of accompanying transactions, formed the first histories.³²

But men in very early times invented means of keeping a record of their activities and of past events, and in this, rather than in the praise of apotheosized chiefs, we find the beginning of history. The Indian wampum is an example of a device of this kind: "The laws explained at different stages of the ceremonial were repeated from strings of wampum, into which they 'had been talked' at the time of their enactment. In the Indian method of expressing the idea, the string or the belt can tell, by means of an interpreter, the exact law or transaction of which it was made at the time the sole evidence."³³ A still simpler device is reported of the Chippewas by Schoolcraft: "A subordinate here handed him, at his request, a bundle of small sticks. 'This,' handing them to me, 'is the number of Leech Lake Chippewas killed by the Sioux since the treaty of Prairie du Chien.' There were 43 sticks."³⁴ And a more elaborate development than wampum was the *quipu*, or knot-writing, of the ancient Peruvians.³⁵

The stimulation to historical and biographical interest is, however, found mainly in connection with great men who are pleased to have themselves and their deeds

³¹ IXTLILXOCHITL, *Histoire des Chichimèques*, quoted in SPENCER, *Descriptive Sociology*, Vol. II, p. 68.

³² SPENCER, *Principles of Sociology*, Vol. III, p. 318.

³³ MORGAN, *League of the Iroquois*, p. 120.

³⁴ SCHOOLCRAFT, *Expedition to the Sources of the Mississippi River*, p. 257.

³⁵ TYLOR, *Early History of Mankind*, p. 154.

glorified. Historical writing is consequently developed mainly at the court; the ruler was its object, and out of the hangers-on was developed a class of specialists in this line. The beginnings of this we see very clearly in Africa, where the king of the Zulus kept men who acted as heralds at the dances, and "at every convenient opportunity recounted the various acts and deeds of their august monarch in a string of unbroken sentences;"³⁶ and among the Dahomans, where on special occasions professional singers, sitting at the king's gate, rehearse the whole history of the country, the recital taking up several days.³⁷ On the Slave Coast there are "*arokin*, or narrators of the national traditions, several of whom are attached to each king or paramount chief, and who may be regarded as the depositaries of the ancient chronicles. The chief of the *arokin* is a councillor, bearing the title of *Ologbo*, 'one who possesses the old times,' and a proverb says, '*Ologbo* is the father of chroniclers.'³⁸ At the stage of culture reached by the ancient Mexicans the profession of historian is already fully developed:

It ought to be known that in all the republics of this country . . . there was, amongst other professions, that of the chroniclers and historians. They possessed a knowledge of the earliest times, and of all things concerning religion, the gods, and their worship. They knew the founders of cities and the early history of their kings and kingdoms. They knew the modes of election and the right of succession; they could tell the number and characters of their ancient kings, their works and memorable achievements, whether good or bad, and whether they had governed well or ill. . . . They knew, in fact, whatever belonged to history, and were able to give an account of all the events of the past. . . . These chroniclers had, likewise, to calculate the days, months, and years; and, though they had no writing like our own, they had their symbols and characters through which they understood everything. . . . There was never a lack of those chroniclers. It was a profession which passed from father to son, highly respected in the whole republic; each historian instructed two or three of his relatives. He made them practice constantly, and they had recourse to him whenever a doubt arose on a point of history. . . . Whenever there was a doubt as to ceremonies, precepts of religion, religious festivals, or anything of importance in the history of the ancient kingdoms, everyone went to the chroniclers to ask for information.³⁹

From evidence of this character we find that the original narrator of historical events and personal history was not usually a priest, and in the more advanced stages of development, as shown in the last citation, it does not appear that the historians are from the priestly class. At the same time it is true that the priests had special interest in being in possession of historical knowledge, in order to further their own interests. Bastian reports that

The only kind of history which is found among the Congo people is the traditions of important events, which are secretly transmitted among the fetich-priests, in order, through the knowledge of the past of different families, to make the people who come to them for advice imagine that they possess supernatural knowledge.⁴⁰

³⁶ GARDINER, *Narrative of a Journey to the Zoolu Country*, p. 65.

³⁷ DALZEL, *History of Dahomey*, *Introd.*, p. xxii.

³⁸ ELLIS, *The Yoruba-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast of West Africa*, p. 243.

³⁹ LAS CASAS in MÜLLER, *Chips from a German Work-shop*, Vol. I, p. 323.

⁴⁰ SPENCER, *Descriptive Sociology*, Vol. IV, p. 34, referring to BASTIAN, *Africanische Reisen*, p. 100.

From the same motives of self-interest the church at all times, and perhaps pre-eminently the Christian church in Europe, has used history and created supposed history (to-wit, miracle) both to preserve and to magnify its past. On this account we may well expect to find that when the church is powerful and able, like the court, to support a number of hangers-on, its representatives will have a prominent place in history and in letters; and of course this was particularly true in Europe during the period when the church had a monopoly of learning. But this participation of the clergy in a general activity is quite different from the claim that history is a priestly creation. An interest in the past is common to human nature, and wherever there was an economic surplus applicable to the cultivation of this interest a class of men sprang up who cultivated it. The economic conditions were met primarily by the court and secondarily by the church, and either of these alone would have developed historians and men of letters.

Finally, we may examine together Spencer's claims that the teacher, the philosopher, the judge, and the scientist are of ecclesiastical origin, because there is, perhaps, more to be said in favor of his theory as applied to these occupations than the others, medicine excepted. Yet Spencer's claim with reference to these is also fundamentally unsound. He says that—

The primitive conception of the teacher is the conception of one who gives instruction in sacred matters. Of course the knowledge thus communicated is first of all communicated by the elder priests to the younger, or rather by the actual priests to those who are to become priests. In many cases, and for a long time, this is the sole teaching. Only in the course of evolution, along with the rise of a secular cultured class, does the teacher as we now conceive him come into existence.⁴¹

Spencer also alleges that in the initiatory ceremonies of the Australians the youth is dedicated to a god, and that the medicine-men are the operators and instructors during the ceremony. These statements, as they stand, are unquestionably incorrect. The most important evidence bearing on initiatory ceremonies among the Australians, that of Spencer and Gillen, to which reference has been made, had not appeared when Spencer wrote. In this work we have, in fact, the first exhaustive and satisfactory account of these ceremonies, and among the Central Australian tribes, to whom the description is limited, the initiatory ceremonies are a very remarkably well organized and successful attempt to teach the young men the traditions of the tribe and to bring them under the influence and control of the older men. The old men, particularly those distinguished by their superior knowledge and good sense, are the teachers and operators during these ceremonies, one part of which, it will be remembered, lasts about four months. The medicine-men, as such, do not appear at all, but all possible suggestive means are employed, and with an almost endless repetition, to impress the youth with respect for the older men of his tribe and for his alcheringa or mythical ancestors.

⁴¹ *Principles of Sociology*, Vol. III, p. 274.

It may be noted here that the deference paid to the old men during the ceremonies of examining the churinga is most marked; no young man thinks of speaking unless he be first addressed by one of the elder men, and then he listens solemnly to all that the latter tells him. . . . The old man just referred to was especially looked up to as an oknirabata or great instructor, a term which is only applied, as in this case, to men who are not only old, but learned in all the customs and traditions of the tribe, and whose influence is well seen at ceremonies such as the engwura [fire-ceremony], where the greatest deference is paid to them. A man may be old, very old indeed, but yet never attain to the rank of oknirabata.⁴²

On the other hand, it is remarkable that the only instance of levity recorded by Spencer and Gillen was in connection with the churinga (sacred object) of an oruncha or "devil-man"—one of the three classes of medicine men—"and on the production of this there was, for the first and only time, general though subdued laughter."⁴³ The medicine-men of the other classes were held in respect, practiced sorcery of various kinds, and in some cases taught their arts to others, but they figured in no way in the general education of the youth. In other parts of Australia some participation of the medicine-man in the ceremonies of initiation is found, but this is slight.

With reference to the other three professions named, that of philosopher, that of judge, and that of scientist, we may say, in brief, that the first form of philosophy is the mythology growing out of the attempt of primitive man to understand such phenomena as echoes, clouds, stars, thunder, wind, shadows, dreams, etc. The creation of a mythology is not the work of the medicine-man alone, but the work of the social mind in general. Among the first forms of science are the number, time, and space conceptions, and a vague body of experiential knowledge growing out of the general activities of the group or the individuals of the group, and essential to the control of these activities and the development of new and more serviceable habits. The first decision of cases was made by old men, and later by men in authority, particularly those to whom pre-eminent ability, particularly in war, gave uncommon authority; and these were first of all rulers rather than priests.

A particular reason, however, for the development of the teacher, the philosopher, the judge, and the scientist within the church is found in the fact that they were peculiarly fitted to further the needs and claims of the church. The medicine-man, as we have seen, operated by means of suggestion, and the church in all times and without interruption has operated on the same basis. The medicine-man claimed that he had connection with spirits, claimed to mediate spirit intervention, and claimed superior knowledge from spirits. The church made all these claims, and hence its knowledge and utterances were regarded as inspired. Aided by this inspirational claim, the church in several quarters of the world grew more powerful than the temporal powers, and developed within itself many special agents. Europe, as is well known, passed through a period of dominance by ecclesiastical forces, and in this period the offices of teacher, philosopher, judge, and scientist were in great part assumed by the church; for inspired teachers and thinkers naturally outclassed

⁴²SPENCER AND GILLEN, *op. cit.*, p. 303.

⁴³*Ibid.*, p. 326.

uninspired teachers and thinkers. And if we accept the power of the church as a fact in early European history, and have in mind the necessity of patronage to the development of professional life, we are not surprised to find that the functions of thinking, teaching, and judging were specially claimed and developed by the church. But these functions originated in society at large, their emphasis in the church is adventitious (if the assumption of temporal power by the church may itself be called adventitious), and they pass again into the hands of the lay specialist whenever the world at large becomes again a more powerful patron than the church.

The most general explanation of the rise of the professional occupations is that they need patronage; and when either the court or the church is developed the patronage is at hand. With the division of labor incident to a growing society, and the consequent increasing irksomeness of labor, particularly of "hard labor," there are always at hand a large number of men to do the less irksome work. Both the court hanger-on class and the priest class have, under the patronage of the court and of the church, furthered the development of the learned and artistic professions, and some of the professions have received more encouragement than others from the church because their presence favored the needs and claims of the church. But their development must be regarded as a phase of the division of labor, dependent on economic conditions rather than on the presence in society of any particular set of individuals or any peculiar psychic attitude of this set.

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